DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 245 228 CS 208 288

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TITLE What Literature Should Adolescents Be Reading?
PUB DATE Apr 84
NOTE 9p.
AVAILABLE FROM Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 225 North Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314 (25 copies, $6.00, 50, $10.00, 100 or more, $18.00 per 100).
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT ASCD Curriculum Update; Apr 1984

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescent Literature; Censorship; Curriculum Problems; English Curriculum; English Instruction; *Literature Appreciation; Literature Reviews; *Reading Material Selection; *Reading Research; Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

Basic skills versus free reading for comprehension, classics versus contemporary novels, and ethnic literature versus a common core of literary culture are among the hotly debated arguments in teaching today. Even among educators and specialists in the field, there is no agreement. However, the National Council of Teachers of English Commission on Literature has surmised several trends in literature instruction. That classics are being taught contrasts with the notion that students need more current or popular works, and despite the persistent rumor that low-track readers are given substandard works, the general trend is toward giving them classics. In addition, teachers may be teaching children to dislike classic literature because they themselves have not been through adequate teacher preparation programs. It also appears that there is an overall decline in the exposure of students to literature at all levels, in part because fewer literary works and more nonfiction works are being published. A related trend is the increased emphasis being placed on the teaching of the sociological content rather than the aesthetic values of a work. Paradoxically, there is a decline in the use of world and ethnic literatures. Other trends include less use of trade books and more reliance on anthologies in schools, and the continued efforts of special interest groups to censor reading lists, textbooks, and library materials. (CRH)

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ASCD Curriculum Update

April 1984

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
225 North Washington Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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What Literature Should Adolescents Be Reading?

Informal survey finds conflicting trends, lack of consensus

By Harriet Bernstein

Literature, whether simple children's stories, classics, or hot contemporary novels, arouses deep feelings. Literature selection issues are both potent and polarizing, having the capacity to fracture the calm usually associated with lovely storybooks and engrossing novels. Conflicting images and assumptions about schooling become visible in the debate about literature curriculum: more time on basic skills versus free reading for growth in comprehension; the classics versus contemporary adolescent literature; a common core of literary culture versus regional and ethnic relevance; literature as art versus literature as a tool for understanding social and psychological issues; and the distinction between censorship and selection.

There are profound and unanswerable questions about how much realism children can tolerate at various stages of development, and tensions about the racist and sexist messages often imbedded in good classical literature. Although the blaring trumpets of math, science, and computer education make the literature debate nearly inaudible at the moment, the push for academic rigor and more highly developed thinking skills sets the stage for a louder debate about who should read what.

William J. Bennett, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, believes there has been a "collapse of consensus about what is worth knowing." Informed observers bear him out: school districts are reaching out in all directions. Some have returned to an emphasis on the classics, while others prefer modern, realistic fiction written to engage the interests of today's young people. Most are doing both, but not always for the same students. At the elementary school level, some districts now urge teachers to read stories aloud and provide children more time for free reading. A growing number of districts have either adopted basal readers with better literary selections or else abandoned basals in favor of real books. Other districts—the overwhelming majority, according to most observers—are either pressured to concentrate on isolated skills by accountability statutes and testing programs or locked into skills-oriented commercial reading "systems." Their teachers have no time, and sometimes no books, to help young children acquire a taste for reading.

Bennett observes that many states have "responded favorably to the National Commission on Excellence's recommendation to require four years of high school English for all students." Says Bennett, "The great next question is what

Judy Blume

William Shakespeare

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"There is more indignation over what is being excluded than over what should be included. Why don't we see a list of books everyone wants to see taught?"

Curriculum Update is published four times a year as a supplement to *ASCD Update*, the official newsletter of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Each issue reports trends, research findings, exemplary programs, and available resources for one curriculum area.

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students will be asked to read in those four years."

My interviews with curriculum directors, English specialists, media specialists, professors, teachers, authors, publishers, and watchdogs suggest that a coherent national, or even local, vision of literature in schools is not likely to emerge in the near future. The lack of consensus about what low-ability students should be asked to read, and what they are capable of understanding, is particularly acute.

A Welter of Trends

According to Alan Purves, Professor in the School of Education at the University of Illinois, no systematic research on what students are reading has been done in 20 years. But the National Council of Teachers of English Commission on Literature has surmised the following trends:

- A trend back to the classics at the secondary level, and more emphasis on good children's literature in the early grades. (But Charlotte Huck, Professor of Education at Ohio State University, along with Jean Osborne at the Center for the Study of Reading, and Dorothy Strickland, Professor of Education at Teachers College, Columbia University, say that the overwhelming majority of children, particularly low-achieving children, are tied to basals and worksheets.) The stampede toward the classics would therefore seem to be more of a trot at the moment.
- A decline in the exposure of students to literature at all levels, a social movement toward utilitarianism, and the substitution of T.V. scripts and romances for good fiction. (This trend appears contrary to the classics trend and bespeaks the hydra-headedness that characterizes the current literary scene.)
- Fewer literary works from publishing houses, and more nonfiction, probably responding to a growing preference by children and adults for nonfiction. (Some observers speculate that the public's hunger for narrative has been sated by television; others think that the national mania for self-improvement has displaced fiction; and still others think that social and international concerns draw people toward nonfiction.)
- More reliance on literary anthologies at the high school level and less use of trade books, probably dictated by budget constraints.
- A decline in the use of world literature.
- A decline in the use of ethnic literature except in large cities.
- A teaching emphasis on the sociological content rather than the aesthetic values of literature. (This trend appears paradoxical in view of the two previous trends, but is explained by the persistent adherence of many teachers to the neo-progressive movement of the 60s and 70s.)
- Continuing efforts by special interest groups to censor textbooks and library materials.
- An absence of good teacher preparation programs in literature teaching.

Interviews with randomly selected school district leaders tend to support the observations of NCTE's Commission on Literature, but add new layers of confusion and complexity.

Roger Long, ASCD President in Washington and Administrator for Curriculum in the Lake Washington School District, Kirkland, touched on most of the issues mentioned by NCTE as he described his district's program. He says there is not a trend, but a "fork," with one branch leading to more reading of the classics, the other leading to more reading of good adolescent literature. In Long's view, the simultaneous trends reflect differing philosophies of individual teachers about literature as artistic analysis or literature as a vehicle to discuss personal and social issues.

Lake Washington has adopted the Harcourt Brace *Odyssey Literature Program* and is attempting to supplement basic texts with classroom sets of books. Students are heterogeneously grouped, and essentially the same novels are required for all students. The district has an aggressive staff development program to help teachers expand the use of basals with pre-teaching skills and enrichment strategies. Because Lake Washington is a white community, says Long, they are "trying to bring ethnic and worldwide materials into our program." A citizen group "influenced by the Gablers," the textbook watchdogs from Longview, Texas, has challenged several books each year, the most recent one being *Jacob Have I Loved,* a Newberry Award winner by Katherine Patterson, on the grounds that it presented the Christian faith in a negative light. It was a library book, and district officials held fast.

Delores Greene's description of the state of literature education in her district contrasts sharply with the picture in Lake Washington. Greene is Administrator for Educational Services in the Richmond, Virginia, Public Schools, a predominantly black, urban school district. She says that most of the reading done by elementary children is out of basal readers. "The

accountability system has made teachers concentrate on skills, and we're having trouble getting teachers to give students books to read, even though our libraries are filled with good books." Richmond's selection policy emphasizes books by black writers, books that relate to black living, books that have a brotherhood thrust, utilitarian books, and books from the present period. Greene thinks that African folk tales are difficult for students because of their different grammatical structure.

Similar impediments to literature study were voiced by Evelyn Blose Holman, Executive Director of Curriculum for Frederick County, Maryland, Public Schools. "There will be, if there is not now, a trend back to the classics. Right now, so much attention is paid to state mandates that the staff's energy is spent on letter compliance rather than quality." Holman believes that teaching "skills" has resulted in students' not being able to integrate skills, and hopes to move away from basals into an exciting integration of skills, "but it will take time." To encourage the reading of good books, Frederick County provides all children and local book stores with posters featuring good summer reading. And in an ingenious political move, the county schools wrote to state senators asking which books influenced them when they were young. Frederick County has been challenged by conservative citizens who believe the county program fosters "secular humanism." The district developed a "sensitive issues policy" and a selection procedure to ensure the right of prior public comment as well as the responsibility for professional judgment.

By contrast, Mary Cary, Curriculum Consultant to Baltimore County Public Schools, reports little trouble with would-be censors. Cary believes that their selection procedures have prevented book challenges, but their procedures are nearly identical to those of Frederick County. Baltimore County's comparative immunity may be the result of blind luck, but it could also be the product of their curricular structure. There is a curriculum guide for each grade level, and materials are specifically chosen for their role in supporting the instructional objectives at each step. There are recommended adaptations for below-average students. Teachers are provided with strategy choices for teaching low-ability readers, including records, film strips, videotapes, and pre-teaching techniques. "When citizens have questions about the suitability of particular books, the staff is able to defend the books on the basis of curricular fit, literary qualities, reading level, and motivational properties."

Like most districts, Baltimore County provides a balanced program with both classic and modern literature. The hot popular literature can be found in the library, but not the classroom. Ethnic literature, according to Cary, is widely represented, and worldwide literature is tucked into the sequence at many levels. The county uses a multitext approach, which Cary says is expensive, not only because the books cost money, but because it is more expensive to develop the program in that fashion.

A less expensive approach is used at St. Mary's High School in Stockton, California, which teaches the same books to low track

Texas textbook critics Norma and Mel Gabler

students, but at a slower pace. According to Carol Lyons, Vice Principal, the policy "makes the teachers happier because there is less preparation and makes the kids happier because they believe they can catch up."

Shakespeare versus Blume

The belief of most practicing educators on the classics versus popular literature question is expressed by Charles Suhor of NCTE. "The cliche of the late 60s was correct—we should 'take students from where they are' and lead them into the world of ideas through whatever doors they will enter. Unmotivated readers will often *start out* enthusiastically with a Beetle Bailey paperback or popular romance or young adult literature. Then we can *lead them* to increasingly richer material. That's how lifelong readers are developed—not by exposing everybody to a body of classics we believe are 'good for them.'"

But that position is not held by everyone. There are, for example, teachers in inner-city ghettos who say their students enthusiastically identify with Homer in *The Odyssey,* and affirm that the classics can be taught to any student. Alan Purves, Professor of Education at the University of Illinois, wonders whether "the people who say they can't teach the classics to hard-to-teach students can teach anything else." Sally Walsh, Secondary English Coordinator for Montgomery County, Maryland, Public Schools says, "If a child can read something by himself, why take it up in the classroom?" In Montgomery County, says Walsh, on-level 9th graders study the *Odyssey,* while low-level students are being introduced to mythology, the concept of the hero, and an adapted version of the *Odyssey* is taught. If teachers think *Julius Caesar* is too hard for the class, they may substitute *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

But there are others who claim that the classics are too remote in time, space, and language for "now"-oriented kids. For them, the important thing is to get the kids reading.

Popular author Judy Blume was mentioned by almost every person I interviewed. Her books, built around problems contemporary children face, such as divorce, teenage pregnancy, or human differences, have a strong appeal. But there were misgivings about the literary qualities of Blume's books as well as similar books by other authors. Several educators noted, however, that Blume's books were of higher literary quality than the popular books they devoured as children. There was also uneasiness about the titillating aspects of popular adolescent fiction. Although many people mentioned that they had expended great efforts in their own youth obtaining copies of similarly spicy books, they were sometimes apprehensive about the potential for fueling battles with would-be censors in an environment so laden with value conflicts.

High or Low Expectations?

Despite persistent rumblings from liberal arts quarters that low-track students are given "junk" literature to read, nobody in my survey admitted to such a practice. "We fight that," said several curriculum directors, a statement that suggests curriculum leaders feel the need to counteract an institutional tendency to lower expectations for low-income and minority students. Robert Hanes, Deputy Superintendent in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina, School District, believes that their desegregation plan, which makes each school a representative racial and economic mix, acts against low expectations for minority kids. Marlene Bates, head of the English Department at Harbor Beach High School, Harbor Beach, Michigan, says that all students receive a classical literature program despite the fact that only 30 percent of the students go on to college. Non-college-bound seniors are required to take a Shakespeare course, but college-bound students can take 19th or 20th century American literature on the assumption that they will be exposed to the Bard later. Low-ability students read regular versions of the classics, says Bates. "It's a matter of presentation. The faculty has regular meetings to share ideas on how to present the classics effectively."

Views on Teachers and Teaching

Many observers believe that teachers are not trained to teach literature and may be teaching students to dislike good fiction. According to Darwin T. Turner, Professor of English and Head of the Afro-American Studies Program at the University of Iowa, education departments tend to teach only adolescent literature and English departments assume that the analysis of text in college classes prepares students to teach literature. According to Alan Purves, many kids learn to hate literature "because it is taught as if it had a set of hidden meanings that only the teacher knows. The 'right answers' come right out of the teacher's guide." Dennis Gray of the Council for Basic Education observes that the "right answer" approach produces only an enlargement of the student's

Judy Blume writes about contemporary adolescents.

understanding of the teacher's interpretation of the book. The subtlety, ambiguity, and irony in good literature is usually difficult for young people to grasp. Their first, halting interpretations of the meaning of good fiction are often off the mark, as seen by experienced, well-read adults. There is a growing body of evidence to support the view that students can move to mature understandings of complex text if their views are respected as they grope toward understanding.

Dorothy Foley, Chief of General Education Curriculum Development at the State Education Department in New York, says, "Some teachers know how to listen to kids and let them think out loud. They respect the student's point of view. I urge teachers to keep asking 'why' questions, and to ask students to find a place in the piece that will support their view." And as James Squire of Ginn & Company points out, new research on the importance of students' background knowledge requires teachers to face up to the issue in their teaching strategies.

In most districts, inservice training for teachers of literature is not being emphasized at the moment. Basic skills and writing are the focus of most current inservice efforts. Says Purves, "People saw writing as a crisis, but literature has not yet been seen as a crisis."

Not everyone thinks that good literature teaching is a matter of pedagogical skill. Bennett of NEH says, "Teachers do best when they know and love literature. NEH summer seminars help teachers love literature. There is no teacher-proof syllabus. In the end, it comes to the interaction between teachers and students. In different hands, different methods can work." But many people are uncomfortable with letting teachers "do their own thing," especially in an era when accountability and high expectations for all students are the order of the day.

Who Chooses the Books?

Even the question of who has the power to select the books turns out to be a policy issue in a state of flux. Although many school districts still permit school faculties and librarians to choose textbooks, supplemental reading materials, and library collections, most observers say that the trend is toward centralizing selection procedures. Charles Suhor of NCTE says the locus of authority is moving upward, "or else teachers are looking over their shoulders." Says Dorothy Strickland of Columbia University, "Teachers are getting further away from making decisions about book purchases."

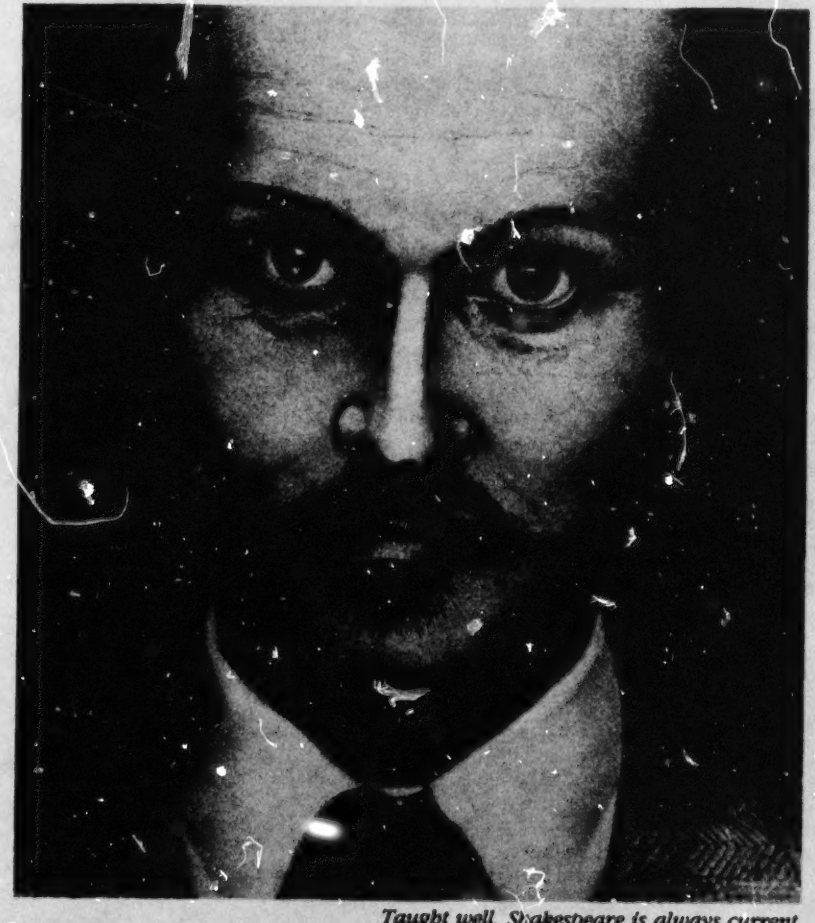
Central office supervisors defend their enhanced power, especially when it involves textbooks and supplemental materials, on the grounds of economy and program management. In school districts where curricular design includes thoughtful selection of all materials to support centrally established objectives, the trend is especially pronounced, although teachers and librarians usually sit on curriculum committees to help select supporting bibliographies.

NCTE policy supports the notion of building-level decision making about books and materials, and opposes central office booklists. William Bennett has a similar view. "I would leave much greater discretion to teachers, but with periodic review." The differing views about who should choose what students read, with defensible arguments on both sides, reveal still another unresolved question in the debate about literature, and point to the ever-present debate about whether teachers are qualified to exercise the autonomy many people believe they should have.

Realism versus Romanticism

Although Judy Blume has become a symbol of popular adolescent literature, her problem-centered approach is rapidly being displaced by a new wave of pre-teen and teenage romances, first marketed aggressively through school book clubs and now selling briskly in bookstores as well. It is clear that these books are raising as many hackles among liberals as problem-centered books do among conservatives. The NEA and the Council on Interracial Books for Children decry these romance series not only because of their "inferior literary quality," but also because of the "sexism and other biases they promote." As seen by their critics, the new-wave teen romances, aimed primarily at girls, focus on boy-catching, with physical

Photo: Dallas Public Library



Taught well, Shakespeare is always current.

appearance, make up, and clothes being the major factors in landing Mr. Right. The characters that inhabit this dream world of romantic love are almost exclusively white, middle-class, and flawlessly attractive. It would appear, then, that the "realism" and "pessimism" of sociologically-based formula fiction is losing ground to "idealism" and "optimism" of romantic formula fiction.

How Much Realism Can Children Tolerate?

Interviews with school administrators and organization leaders surfaced a philosophical tug-of-war over how much realism young children should be exposed to. Advocates of "optimistic" literature, like those who favor "pessimistic" literature, cut across the political spectrum. From Christian fundamentalist conservatives to inner-city liberals, there are those who believe that young children should be given stories with upbeat messages, although their definitions of "upbeat" vary. Those who believe children profit from exposure to "realism" span the philosophical gamut from Bennett of NEH, who emphasizes a more classical realism, to the Council on Interracial Books. This New York-based organization, which promotes non-racist, non-sexist literature for children, favors a more modern form of realism.

Bennett, for example, says: "When you pick books with moral and spiritual reality, students will respond. It is a mistake to give children pap. Fairy tales are a form of realism because they do not deny the existence of the dragon, of evil, or immorality. To deny those things is to deny reality." The Council on Interracial Books presses publishers to present today's family structure realistically, even if that reality departs from the traditionalists' conception of an ideal and optimistic model.

Discussions about proper literary fare for older children and youth, however, reveal even deeper fissures in the body politic. Some traditionalists would have students read nothing written after the 19th century because so much contemporary literature is depressing, especially modern American literature. Some people believe that books containing "mature language" should be stricken from the list, while others think that any child who doesn't know the full repertoire of four-letter words probably lives on another planet. Some educators believe that high school students are mature enough to read anything in print, while others are chary about violence, cruelty, or sex, particularly any deviant sexuality. It is at this point that the debate about the content of literary selections moves into the realm of censorship, which, according to most accounts, is alive and well in the United States.

Censorship or Selection?

Lee Burress, Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point and Chair of the NCTE Committee Against Censorship, keeps track of challenges to school books. "The last study was in 1982," says Burress, "and I see no evidence that the trends of the past decades will change. Decade by decade, it is increasing." Charles Suhor of NCTE affirms that view. "There is a fear of offending anybody who agrees with the Gablers, liberals, women, blacks, or handicapped. This tends to make all textbooks and anthologies look alike." A textbook author who asked not to be identified said that the attacks from book banners have "made everything bland. If you are trying to get students to think and grow, they have to be exposed to a variety of ideas and viewpoints," she says.

Others, however, think that the most virulent attacks from the right are abating. Some school district officials believe that the adoption of broad-based review and selection procedures and provision for orderly challenges has blunted some of the fury. Others, like James Squire, Executive Consultant to Ginn & Company, also believe that leading would-be censors, such as the Moral Majority and the Eagle Forum, have less prominence than they did a few years ago. Quite a number of people queried believe that the greatest censorship is now taking place quietly in publishing houses and school libraries. Publishers want to increase their chances for sales by avoiding potentially controversial subjects, and librarians are said to be either "capitulating in advance," or "choosing more carefully," depending on the viewpoint of the observer.

Have censorship challenges affected the literary quality of what students read in school? Many respondents said so. Burress, for example, notes that *The Scarlet Letter* by Hawthorne, *The Grapes of Wrath* by Steinbeck, and "anything by Hemingway" have been removed from a number of schools for teaching purposes. He points to studies that show there have been emendations even in Shakespeare, and believes that publishers are engaging in "pre-censorship" to avoid controversy. In Texas, where the major book battles of today are being fought, Edmund Farrell, Professor of English at the University of Texas, says that even Emily Dickinson has been challenged by allies of the Gablers.

Ellen Last, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin, has been studying the literary values of the Gablers, and reports the following pattern: a literal interpretation of the Bible; old fashioned patriotism; a traditional family structure where children are respectful of parents; optimistic and uplifting stories; moral didacticism; and a view of government and the economy that portrays a time in the past the Gablers believe was better. Stories about young people in conflict with authority are attacked.

According to Last, the Gablers, whose influence over the Texas State Textbook Committee is substantial, oppose such authors as Thoreau and Emerson, or any other transcendentalist. They have attacked Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener* because the narrator makes an ambiguous reference to Christian charity. The Gablers favor 19th century optimists such as Longfellow and Whittier, and paradoxically, also like Walt Whitman.

Arch conservatives however, come in all shapes and sizes. Lawrence Uzzel, President of *Learn, Inc.*, and a promoter of conservative causes, sees the Gabler's literary canon as "boosterism, both patronizing and overly protective."

Broadening the Literary Canon

Censorship battles have roused the First Amendment ire of many school leaders, distracting them from the positive task of taking a stand on what students should read. "There is more indignation over what is being excluded than over what should be included," says William Bennett of NEH. "It would be good if we could see advocates *for* books arguing with the same intensity. Why don't we see a list of books everyone wants to see taught?"

The notion of a common core of cultural learning appears in many of the recent reform reports, but at the moment, there appears to be more talking than list making. One of the impediments to a new literary canon appears to be distrust. Spokespersons for national origin ethnic minorities and enthusiasts for cultural pluralism fear a return to the cultural centrism of an earlier, simpler time. Many school district officials say they would like to include more fiction written by and about ethnic minorities, but claim it is hard to locate well-written fiction in that category. A textbook author who asked to remain anonymous said: "In many adoption states, representatives of ethnic minorities sit on adoption committees. The tack they have taken in recent years is to require that space allotted to literary selections not only be written by and about their group of Americans but be proportional to their percentage of the population.

"But many ethnic literature selections are quite marginal in their literary quality. Unfortunately, a tendency among newly emerging ethnic groups is to particularize their suffering. When ethnic literature enters the mainstream of universal man, it truly becomes literature, but many ethnic leaders believe that particularism is the test of a valid ethnic literature."

Blouke Carus, President of Open Court, publishers of a phonics based basal reader series that also features good children's literature, would like to broaden their selections, but says, "finding outstanding selections of literary merit from the writings of Chicanos, American blacks, and

"The question is not 'Does the stuff exist?' but 'Does anybody want to find it?'" says Rosa Castro Feinberg from the Lau Center at the University of Miami. She says there is good children's literature in translation from South and Central America, and an increasing body of adolescent literature for Hispanics. On the matter of its quality, Feinberg says, "Classics talk to everybody, but you have to speak their language before you are ready to hear those commonalities." On the lack of universality in ethnic literature, she says, "the degree of self-centeredness is directly proportional to the degree of pain." She believes that minority children have questions about their identity, their place in this society, and their future. For them, ethnic literature, even if it fails to meet the highest literary standards, serves as a "bridge to the society in which they find themselves."

Jean Osborne of the Center for the Study of Reading at the University of Illinois notes another reason, beyond the question of paucity and quality, that may account for the relatively small amount of ethnic literary selections in textbooks. "Works in the public domain can be adapted to the reading levels of the students without obtaining permission from the authors."

Broadford Chambers, Director of the Council on Interracial Books, says that his group sponsored a writing contest for ten years to open the door to book publishing for minority authors. Nonracist, nonsexist literature by minority authors was judged for literary quality. The Council hoped that publishers would be willing to publish prize-winning selections. "We had some successes," says Chambers. "Black writer Mildred Taylor's first book, *Song of the Trees*, was rejected by publishers a number of times. The book was depressing but exciting. But her next book, *Sound of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, won a Newberry Award." Chambers says the Council gave up the contest because publishers are "no longer seeking out third world authors."

The tensions between those who look first to literary quality and those who have social agendas of the left and right seem, at the moment, insoluable. Groups such as the Council on Interracial Books criticize folk and fairy tales, as well as many 19th century classics, because their content is often sexist or racist by contemporary standards. They favor literature that liberates children from the traditional and stereotypic conceptions of the past. Conservative critics see the disintegration of the family and the prevalence of violence, and seek to restore a traditional version of order to a society they believe has lost its way.

Those who see literature primarily in aesthetic terms believe that critics of the left and right fail to respect the intelligence of children. "Children are able to see that earlier literature portrays females and minorities in ways that wouldn't be done today," says one respected reviewer of children's books. "The right and the left are engaged in political criticism, but not literary criticism."

The instructional importance of a broadened literary canon was emphatically put by Alan Purves: "Unless children, starting in kindergarten, read good examples of the wide variety of different kinds of texts from around the world, they are not going to be able to read." William Bennett, who also favors a broader literary menu, spoke to the purpose of literature study: "It is to shape a sensibility, to develop good habits of character, and to lift the imagination beyond the limits of a too narrowly imposed boundary of self-definition."

Motivating Young Readers During the Summer of 1984

Reading Rainbow, a children's television series designed to tempt 1st and 2nd graders into reading good books over the summer, will air over most public television stations beginning July 9. Each program in the 20 half-hour series features a television adaptation of a children's picture book. Each show provides background knowledge through a televised "field trip" segment to introduce the child to the place or experience that will further understanding of the book. A segment filmed in a library fosters the notion that libraries are exciting places to be. The programs are designed to develop a child's positive attitude toward his or her own intelligence, and promote comprehension and thinking skills.

Parents may order an accompanying activity magazine, the *Reading Rainbow Gazette*, filled with reading and writing games such as cartoon strips with fill-in-your-own balloons, crossword puzzles, simple codes, mazes, and hidden-clue pictures. A letter to parents, inserted in the *Gazette*, gives tips for creative television viewing in the home, book titles, and highlights of special interest.

The *Reading Rainbow* series premiered in the summer of 1983. Twila Liggett, executive producer and project director, says "there has been a tremendous response from children to last summer's 15 programs. Book wholesalers report increases in sales of the titles used in the series from 200 to 780 percent. Librarians report that 1st and 2nd graders come into the library asking for the books by title and author."

Reading Rainbow is a co-production of the Great Plains National Instruction Television Library, Lincoln, Nebraska, and WNED-TV, Buffalo, New York, in cooperation with Lancit Media, New York City.

Teachers who want to alert parents to this summer opportunity for their children should tell parents to check with their local PBS station for program listings. Parents may write to: Reading Rainbow Gazette, 1501 3rd Avenue, New York, New York 10028, for information about the activity magazine.

The series will be available free to public television stations for three years, including unlimited recording rights for schools, libraries, and day care centers.

Resources for Multicultural Literature

Educators interested in broadening literary offerings to include works relevant to U.S. ethnic minorities, written by U.S. or foreign authors in English, may contact the following sources:

- American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), Commission on Multicultural Education, Suite 610, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 362-3878. Provides information on standards for multicultural education, as well as four documents on multicultural teacher education. Volume III is an annotated bibliography of selected resources.
- Georgetown University, Bilingual Education Service Center (BESC), Suite 376, 3520 Prospect St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007. (202) 625-3540. Contact person: Nguyen Ngoc Bich. Provides information and materials on all aspects of Vietnamese language and culture, including an annotated list of Vietnamese resources in English. Some information is also available on other Indochinese cultures.
- Georgetown University, Bilingual Education Service Center (BESC), Suite 376, 3520 Prospect St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007, (202) 652-3540. Contact person: Christine Hervi-Newman. Provides information and materials on Hispanic language and culture, with special emphasis on Puerto Rico. Materials include annotated bibliographies of sources in the native language and in English.
- National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), 1860 19th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. (202) 462-4811. Contact person: Linda A. Reed. Provides assistance in utilizing foreign students as resources in the multicultural classroom, including NAFSA staff members to conduct workshops or programs in schools. Also available are print and AV materials.
- National Council on Foreign Language and International Studies, 605 Third Ave. 17th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10158, (212) 490-3520. Contact person: Rose Hayden. Provides useful strategies for internationalizing the English classroom through a compendium of books, articles, cassettes, and other audiovisual materials.
- *Bilingual Education Publications In Print, 1983: Including Audiovisual Materials*. This reference book was

compiled to provide information on those materials available for English-as-a-Second Language programs and for librarians serving bilingual populations. Over 15,000 texts, workbooks, records, and related materials are indexed by language and subject. Title, author, grade level, publication date, series title (if any), price, ISBN, publisher, edition, and any related teaching materials are provided for each entry. Literature selections in Spanish, French, German, Turkish, Portugese, Inupiaq, Vietnamese, other Asian languages, and English translation are listed. The volume makes no value judgment about listings. ISBN 0-8352-1605-5. Available from R.R. Bowker Co., P.O. Box 1807, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106, for $49.50.

• *La Lista.* El Paso Public Library, 501 N. Oregon St., El Paso, Tex. 79901. Reviews Spanish and English materials relevant to the Hispanic community.

• *Lector.* California Spanish Language Database, P.O. Box 4732, Berkeley, Calif. 94704, a new publication which includes reviews of children's and adult materials.

• *Bibliotecas Para La Gente.* Latin American Library of the Oakland Public Library, 1900 Fruitvale Ave., Oakland, Calif. 94601, puts out a list of core materials in English recommended for Hispanic students.

• *Interracial Books for Children Bulletin,* Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023, analyzes children's books and other learning materials for human and anti-human messages. The Council operates the Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Educators, which publishes reference books, monographs, lesson plans, and AV materials designed to promote pluralism in the schools and society.

(This list was compiled with the assistance of Ramon L. Santiago, Bilingual Education Service Center, Georgetown University, Washington D.C., and Yvonne Vargas, Spanish Information Service, Chicago Public Library, Chicago, Illinois.)

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